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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Five Valleys Archery Club

2. Type of Proposed Action:

- Construct a handicap accessible picnic shelter
- Purchase and installation of archery backstops
- Maintain and improve range trails, ramps, parking area, and grounds.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The Five Valleys Archery Club is located near the southern edge of the city of Missoula (and 1.5 miles east of US Highway 93), on leased property owned by Northwestern Energy just off of Lower Miller Creek Road (T12N, R20W, Sec 13 SW4SW4).



Map 1 – Aerial View of Five Valley Archery Club, Missoula, Montana.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA 87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) and MCA 87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range

Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

(a)(i) Shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;

(ii) May not limit the number of members;

(iii) may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and

(iv) shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or

(b) Shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.

5. Need for the Action(s):

The Five Valley Archery Club (FVAC) is the only archery range in the Missoula and Bitterroot Valleys. Because interest in archery and membership for FVAC continues to grow, there is a need to improve the quality of the archery range to meet community demand. The range is in need of a shelter and handicap-accessible ramps and trails. Archery targets are worn and shot through, creating safety concerns for archers and spectators. The equipment that the club owns is insufficient to meet the demand for future archers. In addition, the range, including ramps and trails, are in need of maintenance and improvement.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

The objectives for the FVAC proposed improvements include: improving the safety of the range by installing carpet bales; constructing handicap-accessible picnic shelter; maintaining and repairing ramps and trails to improve safety and handicap-accessibility; and to purchase additional targets and Bows to promote the sport of archery in the community.

7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The proposed improvements would involve approximately 40 acres of the 80-acre Five Valley Archery Club range.

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The property is located on 80 acres of privately owned land. The Five Valley Archery Club entered into a lifetime lease agreement with the Northwestern Corporation D/B/A Northwestern Energy in 2005. The property is located within a floodplain but there are no permanent surface waters or wetlands on the property. All water on the range is seasonal and is directed away from the property via natural water channels. The range offers opportunities for archery shooting only.

9. Description of Project:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • 10 Carpet Bales to be used as backstops: | \$ 3,500 |
| • Construct a 20' X 40', handicap accessible Picnic Shelter | \$10,000 |
| • Range Maintenance Materials, including gravel, to improve and maintain trails and ramps | \$ 4,000 |

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Total Project \$17,500

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:
None

Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
N/A		

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$8,750. ⁰⁰

11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

The FVAC Range is located on 80 acres of exclusively private land leased to the FVAC. This is a private range with a membership fee, though visitors are welcome if accompanied by a member. Approximately 10 other organizations use the range each year, including: Bow Hunters Safety Classes; 4-H; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; various school districts; University of Montana Archery Club; School Archery Clubs; FVAC Spring Rendezvous Shoot; Boy Scouts; Girl Scouts; and various church organizations.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:

Because the Five Valley Archery Club is a non-profit private shooting club for members, there has been no public involvement in the planning process. Proposed range improvement proposals have been discussed with the club members and the associated project vendors and contractors.

13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

14. Names, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

Anne Tanner, 8690 Indreland Road, Missoula, Montana, 59808, (406) 546-3970.

15. Other Pertinent Information:

The Five Valley Archery Club is a nonprofit private shooting club. The range provides the only archery range in 120 miles of the property, with the closest archery range near Helena, Montana.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: April 28, 2013.

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A, the **Proposed Alternative**, and **Alternative B**, the **No Action Alternative**, were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project): to construct a picnic shelter, purchase and install archery equipment, and provide materials for range maintenance and improvement. There are beneficial consequences to acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative**.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Range Development Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active shooting range without the proposed improvements. The no action alternative would have no significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences. The range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent. Neither the proposed alternative nor the no action alternative would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None. Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There was no other alternative that were deemed reasonably available, or prudent. Neither the **Proposed Alternative** nor the **No Action Alternative** would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations):

None

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		#4
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		#7
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		#8
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		#9

10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

2. & 5. There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development. No critical wildlife habitat would be affected. Any resident or transient wildlife may leave the immediate area during construction.

4. The elimination of vegetation for the implementation of the proposed project will not change the overall abundance and diversity of plant species within the area. The proposed project occupies a small portion of the property. Due to prior land use, native vegetation has been disturbed in the area of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project will have a minor impact on native vegetation in the area.

7. The proposed project will cause limited displacement of soils but these improvements and construction will not substantially effect geological features or establish new erosion patterns. Soil disruption for this site is localized. Erosion control measures will be in effect and disturbed area will be reseeded.

8. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions would be created by construction equipment during construction. However, the construction time is short and human effects will be limited due to the sparse population in the surrounding area.

9. This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state owned or controlled property; therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations and the State Antiques Act do not apply.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		#5

6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

5. Range site plans, construction, and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety or the range participants and the public at large.

7. The proposed improvements to the archery range will improve the quality of the shooting sports within the community.

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being implemented are already on an existing range or altered areas that together with the insignificant environmental effects of the proposed action, indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative.

The Five Valley Archery Club's Proposed Alternative, to provide a safe, regulated shooting opportunity, is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the Proposed Alternative (A) for the improvements as outlined in Part I, Paragraph 9.

PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? Individually, the proposed actions have minor impacts. However, it was determined that there are no significant or potentially significant cumulatively impacts. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore, an EIS is not required.

PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION**Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:**

- Anne Tanner, 8690 Indreland Road, Missoula, Montana, 59808, (406) 546-3970.
- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:

ANDREA DARLING

Darling Natural Resource Consulting

Montana City, MT 59634

Date Completed: July 15, 2013

Describe public involvement, if any:

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the *Missoulian*, *Missoula, MT* announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period.